



Bellingham Old Mill Dam Removal Project

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

September 6, 2016

1. Why is the dam being removed?

Answer: To help improve the health of the river, improve public safety, and eliminate future costs and liability for the Town. River health is improved by restoring the free movement of water, sediment, organic matter, and organisms, and converting an human-made impoundment back to free flow conditions again (with improved water quality). This project will improve the health and safety of the Charles River downstream, as well.

2. What is causing the turbidity?

Answer: The project involves removal of some sediment from the river bottom, and also removal of a concrete structure from the river channel. Both of these actions stir up bottom sediments. It is unavoidable during a project like this and temporary.

3. How long will it last?

Answer: A few days to weeks is what we expect. It may also be that the event goes entirely unnoticed, as the river may simply look the same, or as it does during a storm event.

4. Is this bad for the river? Is it harming life in the river?

Answer: The impacts are minor and short term. Aquatic dwelling organisms are generally equipped to find refuge as needed (like during a storm event), especially for something this short-lived. In the medium to long term, the entire river (and life within) benefits from having the dam removed.

5. What is the status of the project?

Answer: The project is currently being put out to bid for the removal of the dam and is scheduled to be awarded in the fall.

6. If I have further questions, who can I call?

Answer: Alex Hackman, Restoration Specialist
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